

Guest Editorial

Dear Reader,

the aim of the present issue of the Journal for East European Management Studies is to contribute to the recent debate as to the state of development of both international management practices in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), and the related academic research (Schuh/Rossmann, 2010). In fact, while the classification of CEE countries by some international organisations including the OECD (2015) indicates that the transition process is complete, others including IMF (2015) and MSCI (2015) point to still persistent disparities in terms of economic and institutional development. In line with the latter, investment-oriented classificatory approach, Poland, the Czech Republic, Russia and Hungary can be ranked as emerging markets, while other CEE, CIS and Southern European countries – even as frontier markets. CEE countries can be – with some degree of simplification – referred to as mid-range emerging economies, i.e. ones with a relatively advanced level of institutional development, yet still lagging in terms of infrastructure and factor market development (Hoskisson et al., 2012). Their unique, intermediate position on the ladder of economic and institutional advancement, as well as a geographic location between advanced and emerging markets raise the questions as to the specific character of these firms' behavior, as well as the potential for enriching existing knowledge on the management of firm internationalization in the case of newly internationalized firms from transition economies.

The present issue is a coherent collection of contributions submitted to the international conference focused around international business in the CEE region entitled "Competitiveness of the CEE Region in the Global Economy", organised by the CEE Chapter of the Academy of International Business (AIB-CEE) in Budapest on 9-11.10.2014. The papers share a common focus on firm-level management issues pertaining to different aspects of cross-border operations in the CEE region, taking into account its particularities. Thus, the issue involves both a review of current research on international business in Poland in order to diagnose the current state of academic development in this discipline in one of the leading markets of the region, as well as subsequently different facets of the firm internationalization process taking into account most recent empirical evidence from the region.

The first paper titled "Emerging advanced topics in an advanced emerging market? International business research in Poland in the period 1990-2014" written by *Łukasz Puślecki*, *Piotr Trąpczyński*, and *Michał Staszków* presents the findings of a structured review of contributions to international business research in Poland in the period 1990-2014. In order to address this objective, qualitative and quantitative methods were integrated to identify main research areas, their

relative importance and changes thereof within the analysed timeframe, as well as specific research topics within each area.

The second paper entitled “Internationalization of top management teams: A comprehensive analysis of Polish stock-listed firms” is authored by *Tobias Dauth* and *Agata Tomczak* and aims to identify whether the firms’ internationalization is reflected by the internationalization of their upper echelons. In order to verify that author conduct a study on top managers of firms listed at the Polish GPW, with application of a holistic approach to measuring board internationalization by taking into account multiple dimensions (e.g. nationality, international education, international work experience, foreign language skills).

The subsequent paper titled “The diversity of European manufacturing plant roles in international manufacturing networks” prepared by *Krisztina Demeter* and *Levente Szász* explores the assumption that Western European (WE) plants belonging to multinational companies are more developed and have higher competence levels than their Central and Eastern European (CEE) counterparts. The authors used a sample of 291 manufacturing subsidiaries from 14 European countries to test this general statement. They argue that the clear distinction between the two regions is gradually changing with diverse plant roles coexisting in both European regions that reflect different development paths or strategies.

The fourth paper entitled “A born global’s radical, gradual and nonlinear internationalization: A case from Belarus” developed by *Tii Vissak* and *Xiaotian Zhang* contributes to the literature on internationalization processes by showing that a born global can experience nonlinear internationalization (de- and re-internationalize) after radical/fast initial growth, and use some subsidiaries as bases for further gradual expansion. In order to verify that the authors have used a case of Belarusian door producer that has invested to seven and exported to 11 more countries.

The final fifth paper “Growth and internationalization of fast growing firms” devised by *Rafał Śliwinski* and *Magdalena Śliwinska* identifies the factors positively and negatively affecting the growth of companies in the foreign markets and internationalization. The authors have examined and constructed in this paper a complex set of those factors which help and impede the growth on foreign markets of fast growing enterprises and their internationalization. Moreover they contributed to the research of fast growing firms, adding more insight into the specificity of Polish enterprises.

We trust that the content of this JEEMS issue will provide you with an insight to the developments of international business and management in the CEE and let them discover a sample of diverse research carried out in the region.

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Memorial

Raoul Üksvärav
(1928 – 2016)

A member of the Honorary Board of the Journal of East European Management Studies, professor Raoul Üksvarav passed away the first of February. He served Tallinn Technical University in the chair of Management and Planning from 1958 till his retirement in in 1989. After it, he was a member of the first Parliament of independent Estonia and a counsellor of the president of Estonia.

Professor Üksvarav was among the founding fathers of the academic cooperation between East and West during and after the long night of the Soviet rule. It was his endeavour and vision to see Estonia back in the Western Europe, academically, managerially and other ways. He was happy to see his vision come true. JEEMS was an important actor to him in this development.

Raimo Nurmi